



Gordon E. Misner
9th & 14th ACJS President
1971-1972 & 1976-1977

Dr. Gordon Misner was born in 1927 in Denver, Colorado. Upon completion of high school he enrolled at San Francisco State College, graduating in 1950 with a Bachelor's Degree. He then enrolled in the Master's program in the School of Criminology at the University of California at Berkeley. Prior to the completion of his Masters in 1952, he joined the Marin County Sheriff's Office (California), and served as an Identification Officer until 1955. He then joined the faculty in the Police School at San Jose College as an Assistant Professor. In the mid-1960s, he returned to the University of California at Berkeley, to pursue his Ph.D. in Criminology, which he was awarded in 1967. He was then asked to remain on as faculty, which he did, until offered the position as head of the Administration of Justice program at the University of Missouri at St. Louis in 1970. Then, in 1976, Misner made his final move to serve on faculty at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

In his first tenure as ACJS President (1971-1972), Misner argued for a more professional organization, stating that the organization up to that point in time had acted like a "beer and chowder society." He believed that criminal justice should model itself after other, more academic disciplines. At the 1972 annual meeting, he brought in scholars from outside of criminal justice, including from institutions such as Yale and Harvard, in order to make his point.

In his second tenure as ACJS President (1976-1977), Misner was instrumental in helping to obtain a Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) grant to establish the Joint Commission on Criminology and Criminal Justice Education and Standards, which consisted of members from both ASC and ACJS. Misner, however, was not hesitant to be critical of other expenditures by the LEAA, especially when it came to the Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP). During his presidential address he now, famously, noted: "The infusion of LEEP money has brought into being the greatest number of harlots the world has probably ever seen...all looking for the LEEP dollar."

Even outside of his two tenures as ACJS President, Misner was an instrumental figure in shaping the academy. He was a strong proponent of having ACJS become an accrediting body for criminal justice programs across the nation as a means of advancing professional academic standards. Still further, Misner has been called the "father of regionalism," for he was instrumental in creating the ACJS regional system in 1973, and then was actively involved in the creation of the Midwest Association of Criminal Justice several years later. For his passion and dedication to ACJS, in 1980, Misner was awarded the ACJS Founders Award.

Misner continued his academic career as UIC, serving as Department Chair until his retirement in the late 1980s, whereupon he was awarded the distinguished title of professor emeritus. He suffered a long illness at the end of his life, and died while on vacation in California on March 11, 2006; he was 78 years old. Misner left behind his wife Csilla ("Sheila"), and their three children: John, Tony, and Kika. His papers and books, numbering 50 boxes in total, were received in 2002 by the College of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University.